

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, August 15, 1961.

The SPEAKER (Hon. B. H. Teusner) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

KESWICK BRIDGE.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: This morning I found it necessary to travel from Adelaide to my home. I left the junction of West Terrace and Anzac Highway at about 8.40 a.m., but it took between seven and eight minutes to complete the journey between West Terrace and the Keswick Bridge because of some form of traffic control that was introduced this morning. Rather than have the police blackguarded over this matter—and I use this word in all fairness because they are criticized from time to time over road traffic matters, and I doubt whether they would be responsible for this morning's event even though they were controlling the traffic—will the Premier insist that the normal road traffic regulations be reverted to not later than tomorrow morning and maintained until some better method is devised?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will have this matter inquired into. I do not know the circumstances the Leader has mentioned or which authority was responsible for any alterations that were made. Honourable members know that to a certain extent traffic arrangements in various municipalities are under the control of the councils themselves.

Mr. Frank Walsh: I think this is a high-ways matter.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will have it examined and advise the honourable member.

NORWOOD HIGH SCHOOL FIRE MAIN.

Mr. DUNSTAN: I understand that two months ago a recommendation was made by an officer of the Fire Brigades Board in conjunction with representatives from the Public Buildings and Education Departments regarding the installation of a new main at the new Norwood high school site specifically for fire protection purposes. It was recommended that this be installed shortly, together with certain hoses, to safeguard from fire the extremely valuable buildings being erected on the site. The school council, which met last night, is concerned that so far nothing seems to have transpired and that the buildings could be endangered if some protection is not given

shortly. Will the Minister of Education inquire urgently into this matter to see what has happened to the proposal?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: Yes, I should be pleased to do so.

BROOKERS (AUSTRALIA) LIMITED.

Mr. BYWATERS: Yesterday, it was announced in the "Public Notices" column of the *Advertiser* that Brookers (Aust.) Limited would be holding a meeting of shareholders later this month to consider, among other things, an application made to the directors for the purchase of the assets and undertakings of the company and the shares in the company, and to receive a financial report. In view of the Government's commitment in this company, is the Premier able to give the name of the interested company and state the position relating to the Government's interest in this company?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Following upon recommendations made by the Industries Development Committee, the Government guaranteed certain loans to Brookers Limited. Those loans were of fluctuating amounts, but they have been somewhat reduced recently. I understand that a company has offered to take over Brookers Limited, and the Government has been asked whether it would agree in principle to another company's taking over Brookers Limited. I have replied that the Government would not object in principle but that the matter would have to be referred back to the Industries Development Committee for report and recommendation. I cannot disclose the name of any interested party, for I have no authority to do that, but no doubt that will become manifest later. Sometimes it can be embarrassing to a company if it is known to be making overtures to, or to be interested in buying, another undertaking. All I can say is that it is a highly reputable company with undoubted finance.

WATER STORAGES.

Mr. HARDING: Recently I visited some reservoirs and saw a position which, I think, is alarming. On Sunday I was at South Para, and recently I have also seen the Warren and Millbrook reservoirs. This position follows probably one of the best seasons we have ever had throughout the State, with stock looking wonderful. Can the Minister of Works indicate the position regarding water stored compared with other years, and say when his department will have to start pumping from the River Murray.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: It is a coincidence that the member for Unley (Mr. Dunnage) indicated, as I came in, that he would ask this question. This matter directly concerns him because he represents a metropolitan constituency. I will correct, if I may, the impression that may be gained from the honourable member's question on two grounds. Firstly, the water storage position in the metropolitan area is not alarming and, secondly, I do not agree that we have had one of the best seasons on record. Speaking generally of the State, the season has been very patchy and extremely late in opening satisfactorily after a false start. I believe that most country members, except perhaps honourable members from the South-East, would feel that the season has not been ideal from many points of view. However, agriculturally the season is recovering a good deal. From the point of view of water catchment, it has been a good season nowhere in the State, and the Adelaide hills area seems to have missed out on heavy rains which normally put much water into the reservoirs, but the position is not alarming. Up to the present we have not caught much water in the reservoirs as the figures I obtained this morning show. At this time last year we had 14,000,000,000 gallons in metropolitan reservoirs, whereas at present we have slightly less than 6,000,000,000 gallons. The north of the State depends largely on the Morgan-Whyalla scheme. Pumping is going on there all the time at full capacity, and additional provisions which operated last year have safeguarded the position there fairly satisfactorily. On Eyre Peninsula steps are already being taken and pipes are arriving at Port Lincoln for emergency work in the Lincoln basin to safeguard the general position throughout the Tod River and Uley-Wanilla systems. The Engineer-in-Chief and I have often discussed the metropolitan area position. The fact that the Government took the precaution on the recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief to install the fourth pumping unit in each of the pumping stations on the Mannum-Adelaide line has safeguarded the position in the metropolitan area and, to a large extent, has given us additional capacity which would enable a decision as to when pumping should start to be deferred somewhat later than normally would be the case, because we can pump more water in less time if we are obliged to do so. Metropolitan reservoirs frequently get good intakes in the spring and right on into late spring; therefore, I think it is not

necessary to decide about commencing pumping for at least another five or six weeks.

Mr. Harding: There is no water in the ground.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I agree, but there is certainly no need for panic. The position is being closely watched, and honourable members can be assured that Mr. Dridan will recommend that pumping commence just as soon as he considers that is necessary.

SOCIAL STUDIES.

Mr. CLARK: When I spoke on the Address in Reply debate I congratulated the committee that had recently drawn up the new course of instruction in social studies for our schools. I notice that in the course reference is made to teaching various functions of the State and Commonwealth Parliaments, including elections for the Senate and the House of Representatives. I was wondering if the approaching elections will mean that teachers will be allowed the opportunity of explaining to children the current methods of voting both for the State and Commonwealth elections. I believe that this is highly desirable, because over the last few years many people have come here from the United Kingdom and other countries where voting systems are somewhat different from ours, with the result that confusion sometimes arises. I believe that if our children could learn at least the rudiments of the voting system—without any consideration of Parties entering into it—it would help them. Does the Minister know, or can he ascertain for me, whether this instruction includes some teaching concerning our voting systems, and if it does not, could this matter be taught to the children?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: I am indebted to the honourable member for the suggestion, which I think is excellent, and if it is not already covered I will take it up with the Director of Education and ask that it be so.

DRIVING SCHOOLS.

Mrs. STEELE: Can the Premier say whether the Government intends to make it compulsory for car driving schools to be registered, and further, whether any standard is proposed for instructors of driving, who are today advertising themselves as being qualified to undertake instruction as demanded under the Act before people are eligible to drive a car?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Regarding the first part of the question, there have been two or three recommendations that some steps should be taken to ensure that

people conducting driving schools should be competent to do the job and that the matter should be reasonably handled. Whether it would be necessary to actually licence the school or merely the person teaching would have to be examined. In general principle, I think honourable members can take it that an amendment along these lines will be submitted to Parliament, but I make it clear that there is no suggestion whatever that this will become a closed occupation. The only test that would be applied as to whether or not a person would get a licence would be whether he were a competent and reputable teacher. It is not intended to create a profession in this regard, because I think it would be highly undesirable to set up a new economic class of people who could teach motor driving. If anyone has the idea of gaining some economic advantage by this means, the Government would not have a bar of that suggestion. The proposal is for a licence for either a class or a person to enable him to conduct driving lessons, but the whole test will be whether the police or some other adequate authority are competent to give the lessons, and nothing else. In reply to the second part of the question, I shall look at that matter and answer it in due course.

PARKING FACILITIES.

Mr. LAWN: Yesterday the Adelaide City Council discussed an application by the Municipal Tramways Trust for greater parking rights for buses in Victoria Square. Arising out of the discussion, Councillor Gerard advocated building a parking station over the Adelaide railway station, suggesting that it could be used as a terminal for country buses. He said that the time was near when all these buses parking in the city of Adelaide would have to be driven out as space would not permit of a terminal there. Councillor Gerard says that overseas there are ways of taking the diesel fumes out of parking spaces for the benefit of hotels built over the top of railway stations. He says the diesel fumes can be taken away so that they are not effective. Will the Premier submit this proposal, for the building of a parking station either over the top of the Adelaide railway station platforms or further west over the railway lines, to Cabinet so that it may be referred to the Public Works Committee for inquiry and report, having in mind the need for greater parking facilities and the practicability of the scheme?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I read the reported remarks attributed to the

councillor and noticed that he was not concerned with the case on its merits, but had to make some personal references. I am not sure whether they were directed to me or to the Railways Commissioner.

Mr. Lawn: He mentioned your name.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: He did, but he mentioned it in connection with the report I received from the Railways Commissioner, so whether the eulogy was directed at me or at the Railways Commissioner I am not sure. The Adelaide City Council has been collecting large sums in fees from motorists through parking meters on the direct understanding that the council would act to get off-street accommodation for motorists; but it has done nothing about it. I can understand that the motorists are now becoming a little critical of the council's attitude in this matter. If it could, of course, it would shift its responsibility to the Railways Commissioner—who, incidentally, does not collect parking fees through meters. The Government is most disappointed with the Adelaide City Council at the way it is using the money so collected from parking meters. We thought that by this time some positive action would have been taken in this matter. Unless it is taken, there may be some amending legislation in this House this session.

Mr. LAWN: Instead of replying to my question the Premier took the opportunity of eulogizing the Adelaide City Council! Will he consider forwarding to the Public Works Committee, for consideration and report, the question of the practicability of having a parking station near the Adelaide railway station?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I regret that I did not reply to the honourable member's question directly enough, but I thought I had given him a clue to my views in this matter. For several years the State Government has been most urgently requiring about three acres of land adjacent to Parliament House to provide a modern printing office. The Government Printing Office is cramped, the operatives are working under bad conditions, and the department is using heavy machinery on upper floors, which is not safe by anybody's standards. In fact, the present building is entirely unsuitable for a modern printing works. The land we are looking for must obviously be adjacent to Parliament House, because of the necessity of producing Bills, *Hansard* and other printed matter promptly for honourable members. The Government,

therefore, has been investigating the very question the honourable member has raised. We were most anxious to get a block of land near the railway station for the purpose I mentioned, but I must confess that the Railways Commissioner wore us down. The objections he raised and the costs involved did not, in our opinion, warrant our taking any steps in the matter at this stage. The honourable member's suggestion could be implemented, for that is done in other parts of the world where land values are much higher than they are in Adelaide, but it is expensive and would involve inconvenience to the railways and much capital expenditure. Cabinet concluded finally that it would be much better for the Government to look for three acres of land elsewhere for its printing works. The Government was under an obligation to provide a printing works. It is not the Government's obligation to provide parking stations; the Adelaide City Council obtains all the money from parking meters, and under those circumstances the provision of a parking station would be a function of the council. If the land were available it would be used for a Government purpose.

PORT MACDONNELL SLIPWAY.

Mr. CORCORAN: Can the Minister of Agriculture say when the work on the slipway at Port MacDonnell will be completed and when the slipway will become available for use by local fishermen?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The target date for completion is June, 1962.

CONSTRUCTION CAMPS.

Mr. NANKIVELL: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about the policy of the Electricity Trust concerning construction camps, not only in general but more particularly the one at Parilla on the Pinnaroo extension?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The chairman of the trust has advised me that the construction of the 33,000-volt line to Pinnaroo has been completed and the trust's construction camp at Parilla (which is the only camp operated by the trust) will be closed when the supply system in Parilla is completed. The trust will arrange board for the employees engaged on the subsidiary work in the smaller townships along the route of the main and no delay in the work should result under this arrangement.

ELECTORAL ROLLS.

Mr. COUMBE: Has the Minister of Education a reply to the question I asked last week about electoral rolls?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: Yes. The Attorney-General informs me that the 1961 print of the joint Commonwealth and State Assembly subdivision rolls is now available for sale purposes for all Commonwealth divisions except Boothby and Port Adelaide. It is expected that it will be at least one month before the usual sets of Assembly rolls are available to the House.

NEW CLARE HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. QUIRKE: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about the new Clare high school?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes. The Director of Public Buildings informs me that sketch plans for the new high school at Clare are at present in course of preparation. When completed, they will be submitted to the Education Department for ultimate reference to the Public Works Standing Committee.

NEW KIMBA AREA SCHOOL.

Mr. BOCKELBERG: Can the Minister of Works inform me about the building of a new area school at Kimba, and say what stage the work has reached?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Director of Education is at present considering the priority of the many new buildings which he has requested. When this information is to hand, I will be in a position to advise the honourable member further.

REPRESENTATION ON HARBORS BOARD.

Mr. TAPPING: I refer to a deputation to the Minister from the Trades and Labor Council in 1959, led by the member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Ryan) and myself, seeking an employee representative on the South Australian Harbors Board. On that occasion there were members of the Waterside Workers' Federation, engineering unions, the Seamen's Union and Government workers, who believed that in the interests of co-ordination it would be desirable to have a member nominated by the Trades and Labor Council to this board. Eventually, the Minister replied that the proposal made by the deputation had been rejected for the present. The Minister's having used those words prompted me to think the proposal might be considered soon. Has the Minister of Marine, the Harbors Board or the Government considered having an employee representative on the board?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I think I intimated at the time that in addition to the interests represented by the deputation other interests had sought representation on the board. The view of the board, and of the Government, was that there was no need to enlarge the board's personnel and that, in fairness to all concerned, if the deputation's representations were to be agreed to, the board would have to be enlarged by two. That was considered unnecessary and the position is unchanged since then. There are no vacancies on the board at present and the matter is as it was when I last replied to the honourable member.

PORT ADELAIDE GIRLS TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. RYAN: On August 2 I asked the Minister of Works a question about a building occupied by a commercial course of the Port Adelaide girls technical high school during the day and by an adult education class in the evening. Yesterday, the school council expressed concern about the primitive conditions under which the students and adults were asked to work. On August 3 two officers—presumably from the Public Buildings Department or Education Department—inspected the school, no doubt under instructions from the Minister of Works. One night last week adults were obliged to carry a commercial machine from this building to another building to continue their studies because the condition of the temporary building was so antiquated. Has the Minister anything to report on the investigation carried out by the officers I mentioned and can he say when something will be done in the interests of the safety of those using that building?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have not received a report on the matter. I do not know whether my colleague, the Minister of Education, has any report, but we will confer with a view to getting an informative answer for the honourable member.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE PARKING.

Mr. SHANNON: Following the matter raised by the member for Adelaide in the debate on the Address in Reply (and he appears to be an expert on parking because we heard some more about it this afternoon) has the Premier examined the position that has arisen regarding the parking privileges enjoyed by members of Parliament outside this House, and has he any recommendations to make as to an appropriate basis for parking to ensure that

members do not abuse this privilege by assisting their friends to park here?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Minister of Works is examining this matter at the moment, and it is intended that a letter shall go to each member setting out the provisions that should apply regarding parking outside Parliament House. After this letter goes out, and members realize that the rules will be more tightly enforced than previously, I do not think there will be any difficulties.

URANIUM MARKETING.

Mr. McKEE: It was reported in the *Advertiser* last March that the Director of Mines (Mr. Barnes) and Mr. Williams had gone abroad to study the uranium position on behalf of the South Australian Government. They were to visit Britain, Europe, Canada and America and intended to have discussions about the overseas marketing of scandium. Can the Premier report on the commercial production of scandium and on the overseas marketing of uranium as a result of the visit by these officers?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: There has been some demand for small quantities of scandium, which is a rare earth. The cost of scandium is high, but we have apparently devised a means of extracting this earth that is not known elsewhere and its extraction would be profitable if there were a demand for it. Neither of the officers has returned to Australia. Mr. Williams is investigating nuclear power plants recently commissioned in America.

WATER METER READINGS.

Mr. LAUCKE: At present when a farmer who has a water service to his property permits a neighbouring farmer to take a private line on to his property via the first farmer's meter, the Engineering and Water Supply Department reads only the first farmer's meter. This leads to an unsatisfactory situation, with adjustments in water consumption and relevant payments to be made between farms. In many instances it is not conducive to good neighbour relations. If the department read all meters on indirect services and, by necessary deductions, rendered individual accounts to each consumer a much more satisfactory and clearly defined situation would ensue. As each customer pays water meter charges and his lands are ratable, can the Minister of Works say whether he will consider reviewing the relevant regulations to enable all meters on indirect service to be read and individual accounts rendered to each consumer?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The honourable member's question is full of interest. In the first place the services he described, namely, a service from farmer A, who abuts a main, to farmer B, who is remote from the main, must be approved by the Engineering and Water Supply Department before it is a legal service. Secondly, the department, although it may permit such an extension, does not normally take into account that farmer B has such a service; it holds farmer A responsible, as he is the original lessee of the service, and the arrangement between farmer A and farmer B is purely an internal arrangement between neighbours who have obtained the consent of the department to the extension in the first place. To read meters on these properties would involve access through farmer A's property at all times, and I think that would require an easement. I am sure that the department has no wish to involve itself in arrangements which, after all, are purely matters of convenience between owners. If the two farmers concerned cannot agree, the remedy is for farmer B to seek an easement from farmer A, run his service to the main and get a direct service. The department could find itself involved in all sorts of difficulties if it agreed to the proposition suggested by the honourable member. Failing some amicable arrangement, the best thing would be to revise the services in the terms I have suggested. If there is any specific case the honourable member has in mind and he refers it to me, I shall have it examined to see what can be done.

TIMBER.

Mr. RALSTON: I have received two letters from the president of the South Australian Sawmillers Association (Mr. Roughana) expressing concern at the position of the radiata pine industry in the South-East of this State. In his first letter, Mr. Roughana said:

Recently I attended an industry panel meeting in Canberra on behalf of our association, when the latest position pertaining to the Australian sawmilling industry was submitted to the Department of Trade through Mr. A. T. Carmody, First Secretary Tariff and Imports. Each State representative presented his case and I am attaching a copy of my evidence for your information. The overall picture of the Australian sawmilling industry is not a good one and Mr. Carmody acknowledged that his Minister was concerned at the lack of stability for the future of the timber industry.

In his second letter, he said:—

Experts within our industry do believe that we have at least six months of further trade recession (some predict 12 months); therefore, it is not a matter of expedience but rather one

of necessity that we seek your urgent assistance. It is not an exaggeration to say that, unless immediate assistance is given to the private producers, particularly by one's own State, grand scale unemployment will quickly develop in the South-East.

Will the Premier say whether his Government has made submissions to the Tariff Board to have an emergency duty imposed on imported softwoods to protect the radiata pine industry; if not, does the Government, as the largest producer of softwoods in South Australia, intend to recommend to the Tariff Board the imposition of emergency tariffs or temporary restrictions on imported softwoods?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It has never been the policy of the Government to make representations to the Tariff Board in relation to inquiries held on applications by an industry for tariff protection. That is obviously a matter between the Commonwealth authority controlling the tariff protection of the country and the industry concerned. I am not sure whether in this instance the Woods and Forests Department assisted some other body in preparing a case. Possibly it was represented as a directly interested party. I will find out whether or not that was so and advise the honourable member. As to the general question of using South Australian timber, the Government has always given the most direct and positive assistance because, as members realize, the Government is by far the biggest sawmiller in this State and it is in its interests to use, and to advocate the use of, our timbers to the greatest possible extent. I assure the honourable member that that has been, and will continue to be, the policy of the Government. Unfortunately (and this is a problem this industry has had to face) some mills have not been sufficiently capitalized to enable them to install modern equipment to treat timber. As a result, from time to time these mills (and at one stage the Government mills) were putting out badly cured timber, and local timber had a bad reputation, but I am pleased to say that in the main this has been remedied and seasoned timber from our forests is regarded, for the purposes for which it is suitable, as being of high quality. To ensure sales the Government is attempting to eliminate from the industry the under-capitalized sawmills that are not able to season timber and provide the necessary quality. However, I shall get a report for the honourable member on this matter.

Mr. RICHES: Will the Premier consider making representations to the Commonwealth Government and ask it to give preference in its

works to Australian timbers over imported timbers because of the state of the milling industry in Australia? I have been informed by timber millers that valuable and extensive contracts have been let by the Commonwealth Government at Woomera, Maralinga, and other places along the transcontinental railway and that in almost every instance it has specified imported timber, whereas, in the opinion of local traders, Australian timbers would meet requirements just as well. In these days of adverse trade balances, they are asking whether representations should not be made to have Australia use Australian timber where possible.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I shall be pleased to address the question to the Commonwealth authorities. Frankly, I was surprised to hear what the honourable member said regarding contracts for Woomera and Maralinga, because I saw in the press two or three months ago a statement by a Commonwealth Minister to the effect that the Commonwealth Government had issued a directive that all contracts should specify Australian timber and that no departure should be made from that except with special approval where it was not possible to get Australian timber that would comply with the specifications. I was therefore interested to hear the honourable member's question, because it appeared to be a contradiction of that press report. I shall have the matter elucidated.

Mr. RALSTON: Is the Premier aware that the specifications for the first stage of the proposed Mount Gambier technical high school include provision for about 99½ per cent use of imported timbers, either from overseas or from other States? I have seen the specifications. Will the Premier re-direct the attention of all Government departments to the need to use radiata pine on all occasions, and direct the attention of architects who are designing a building for Government use to this need?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The honourable member mentioned a specification for a 99½ per cent use of imported timbers for the building of a school at Mount Gambier. I will get a report for the honourable member on the matters he has raised.

JURYMEN'S ALLOWANCES.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Has the Minister of Education a reply to my recent question regarding jurymen's allowances?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON: The Attorney-General has advised that jurors are at present paid a travelling allowance of 1s. per mile one way when attending court. In the instance

quoted the travelling allowance was paid for the journey from Iron Baron to Port Augusta plus £2 15s. per day jury fee. Since this trial lasted more than one day the jurors were provided with accommodation at a local hotel and incurred no travelling expenses on the subsequent days. Following the conclusion of the trial the juror had to return to Iron Knob, but this expense was covered by the initial travelling allowance. There is a delay in payment since jurors are at present paid at the conclusion of each month. However, arrangements already exist to make advances to jurors during their service and quite a few avail themselves of this facility. On an average, a juror attends court twelve days in his month's service. The amount of book work to pay on a weekly basis would be out of proportion to the amounts involved. Following the recent increase of the basic wage to £14 3s. per week Cabinet has decided to increase the fees paid to jurors from £2 15s. to £3 per day.

ABATTOIRS BOARD.

Mr. STOTT: Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to the question I asked on August 9 regarding the alteration of market days at the Gepps Cross abattoirs and whether ring selling of cattle should be abandoned in favour of pen selling?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I wrote to the Abattoirs Board and also rang its chairman about this question, and I was told that the board would meet yesterday to take these discussions a stage further and that the chairman would get a report as soon as he could. He said that if I did not receive a report today I would know that at least the board was doing its best to give a proper reply. I assure the honourable member that I will see that he gets it at the earliest opportunity.

FORBES PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: The Minister of Works will appreciate that there are many portable buildings at the Forbes primary school. As it is necessary to take all possible fire precautions, will the Minister endeavour to see that a fire hydrant is installed on the school property?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes, I will make a report on that school.

NANGWARRY POST OFFICE.

Mr. HARDING: Has the Minister of Forests a reply to the question I asked last week regarding the proposed post office at Nangwarry?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The erection of a building on allotment 119, Nangwarry, for use as a post office has been approved. Agreement of the Postmaster-General's Department, Canberra, to conditions of the lease is awaited, when tenders for the construction of the building will be invited.

PARKING METER REVENUE.

Mr. RYAN: I recently sought information from the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads, on discussions taking place in Cabinet for an amendment to the legislation to enable parking meter revenue to be held over for off-street parking. I also asked whether this legislation could be applied to municipalities outside Adelaide. Has the Minister that information?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: No, I am not able at this stage to comment further.

WATER PRESSURES.

Mrs. STEELE: During the prolonged and sometimes severe heat waves of last summer, difficulty in obtaining water at peak hours was experienced by residents of some of the higher areas in my electorate. At this juncture I should like publicly to pay a tribute to the officers of the Engineering and Water Supply Department, and particularly to the Engineer-in-Chief and the Engineer for Water Supply, who did a good job under difficult conditions to ensure that the residents got water. However, since then further difficulties have been reported to me from time to time through the winter. In fact, only yesterday I received a further call from a harassed housewife at Beaumont saying that she was without water for three hours and it was washing day. Could the Minister of Works inform the House of any current plans proposed further to improve the water supply in these areas?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have had earnest and urgent discussions with the Engineer for Water Supply on this matter and, in view of the honourable member's complimentary remarks, I am sure that further discussions will ensue. I am not sure at the moment just what is being done. I know that certain action was contemplated and it could well be that the temporary shortage of the last day or so was the result of work being done. However, I am not certain of that. I will discuss the matter again with the Engineer for Water Supply and let the honourable member have a report.

Some people in the high areas of the foothills have built houses that we advised them could

not be reliably served—I think that is fair comment. They have built in high spots and the service to them must, at best, be somewhat unreliable in peak periods. However, in spite of that, we have done what we can to improve the services and will do more to improve them soon. I will bring down a report and let the honourable member have the information.

MILK PRICES.

Mr. DUNSTAN: I have had a complaint from the proprietor of a small delicatessen in my district who is concerned about the supply of milk to him. He has handed to me two invoices from his milk wholesaler, one for the week ending May 5 and one for the week ending May 12. In the week ending May 5, he got 12½ gallons of bottled milk in pints, for which he was charged 5s. 6½d. a gallon, and 2½ gallons in half-pints, for which he was charged 6s. 2½d. The following week, because his gallonage in bottled pints fell below 10 gallons, he was charged for nine gallons of bottled milk in pints at 6s. 8d. a gallon, compared with 5s. 6½d.; and for the 2½ gallons that he got in half-pints he was charged 7s. 4d. The result was that for the nine gallons for which he was charged 6s. 8d., although his total consumption was more than 10 gallons, he got no profit at all because the retail price of milk was exactly what he was charged for the nine gallons. Naturally, he feels somewhat disturbed that he is required to provide a service like this to his customers, with refrigeration, obtaining and selling the milk and getting absolutely nothing for it. As his total gallonage, taking both half-pints and pints together, is more than 10 gallons, it seems that perhaps some injustice is being done here. Will the Minister of Agriculture obtain a report on the Milk Board's policy on this matter?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will examine the details of that question and get a report.

TUG PENS.

Mr. TAPPING: On July 23, 1957, the Public Works Committee recommended the construction of tug pens at Birkenhead. The reason given was that there were frequent openings of the Birkenhead Bridge, and the tugs' being placed in a special pen or special berths would obviate those frequent openings. At that time the work was considered urgent, but so far no attempt has been made to commence it.

Can the Minister of Marine say whether it is intended to build the tug pens at Birkenhead soon?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: This matter has been considered from time to time, and on several occasions since I have been Minister of Marine. The problem is that the provision of tug pens is costly and will involve us in the expenditure of Loan funds. The return from such an investment would be meagre. It would be one of those works that are purely a matter of convenience. It would be unprofitable and an unpayable proposition so far as revenues from the Harbors Board were concerned. But, apart from that, the Loan funds alone to the Harbors Board (and, indeed, to most other Government departments) have been limited, and priorities have necessarily had to be carefully preserved. So that, while the board has had upon its hands major harbour developmental projects, both at Port Adelaide and more particularly at the other outports, every one of them being involved (Wallaroo, Port Lincoln, Thevenard and Port Pirie), it has not been possible to divert funds from first priority works to the provision of tug pens. I must inform the honourable member that no provision can be made, at least in this year's Estimates, for that proposal.

HOUSING TRUST: PORT AUGUSTA PROGRAMME.

Mr. RICHES (on notice):

1. How many applications are currently held by the Housing Trust for houses at Port Augusta?

2. How many houses are available?

3. How many houses are under construction?

4. What is the reason for delay in completing houses under construction?

5. Will consideration be given to the possibility of speeding up the building programme at Port Augusta?

6. Will consideration be given by the trust to the building of homes for pensioners at Port Augusta?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Chairman, South Australian Housing Trust, reports:—

1. 60.

2. An average of 13 families a month are housed in newly completed houses and vacated houses.

3. 28.

4 and 5. Building at Port Augusta is being carried out at the rate conditioned by other commitments of the Housing Trust.

6. 13 houses have been built and two are being built under the Country Housing Act for letting to pensioners and the like. The funds available will not permit any extension of this programme for the time being.

INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the interim report of the Industries Development Special Committee.

Ordered to be printed.

ARTIFICIAL BREEDING BILL.

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN (Minister of Agriculture) moved:

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to provide for the establishment and maintenance of an Artificial Breeding Board and for purposes incidental thereto.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill introduced and read a first time.

PARLIAMENTARY DRAFTSMAN.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved:

That Standing Order No. 85 be so far suspended for the remainder of the session as to enable the Parliamentary Draftsman and his assistant to be accommodated with seats in the Chamber on the right-hand side of the Speaker.

Motion carried.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CONSOLIDATION BILLS.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved:

That the House of Assembly request the concurrence of the Legislative Council in the appointment for the present session of a joint committee to which all Consolidation Bills shall stand referred, in accordance with Joint Standing Order No. 18, and to which any further question, relative thereto, may at any time be sent by either House for report.

That, in the event of the Joint Committee being appointed, the House of Assembly be represented thereon by three members, two of whom shall form the quorum of the Assembly members necessary to be present at all sittings of the committee.

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council transmitting the foregoing resolutions.

That Messrs. King, Millhouse, and Frank Walsh be representatives of the Assembly on the said committee.

Motion carried.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

In Committee.

(Continued from August 10. Page 396.)

Grand total, £30,748,000.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I want to clear up a few matters before dealing with the Loan Estimates in detail, because I am not satisfied in my mind that we can expect any major public works to commence forthwith which would offer any immediate assistance to relieve the unemployment position. I am concerned with some of the remarks which have been made in regard to unemployment, and I understand that the member for Gouger used these words:

All Labor's financial policy is based on incredible contradiction. We have recently had an economic squeeze, partially based on the hire-purchase industry, yet the Leader of the Opposition has said in this House that there are not enough controls on hire-purchase. That is an incredible contradiction.

Mr. Chairman, I never object to any honourable member quoting what I have said from time to time in this House. The only condition I require is that I am quoted correctly, and I want to assure the honourable member that Labor's policy in relation to hire-purchase and particularly that of domestic appliances is that the hirer should at least acquire some equity by the payment of a deposit prior to delivery of the goods. Our policy has never agreed with the interest charges being imposed in this type of business. May I remind the honourable member that when the late member for Light introduced a certain amendment to the Government's legislation to provide for a deposit on this particular type of business, he was supported by the member for Gouger contrary to the policy of his Government. I desire to assure the honourable member that I have never scabbed on my mates in industry or opposed the policy of the Party which I have the honour of leading.

Returning to the statement by the member for Gouger that the economic squeeze was partially based on the hire-purchase industry, the incredible contradiction is that the honourable member is apparently happy with the policy of a Government which would bludgeon the whole of the community into unemployment and destroy business confidence in its attempt to restrict hire-purchase transactions, but he would not support our suggested amendment to the Hire-Purchase Agreements Bill stipulating the maximum interest charges which would be allowed in hire-purchase dealings.

Another matter concerning the unemployment position is related to negotiations between the Treasurer and me, and it is at this stage that I desire to inform the House of what has transpired. On February 10, 1961, I forwarded the following letter to the Treasurer:

As you are no doubt aware of my request to the Prime Minister to arrange a conference of Premiers and State Opposition Leaders to review the national economic emergency and his refusal to accede to my request, I desire to request that you as Premier call a conference within the State of representatives of industry, commerce and trade unions for the purpose of compiling a plan to counteract the impact of the economic restrictions which are now being imposed by the Federal Government and retarding the industrial development of South Australia. Large numbers of employees are being dismissed and, if permitted to continue, will create a position similar to the depression years from 1930. I trust you will view this request as one of urgency.

On February 21 I received the following evasive letter, which was meant to be a reply to my communication:—

In respect to your communication regarding retrenchments in the motor vehicle industry, I can assure you that everything we can possibly do from this end is being done to relieve the position of those who have lost their jobs. A survey has been made of Government departments' requirements, and, where possible, employment has been provided. Unfortunately, a large number of the retrenched persons are not skilled tradesmen but are process workers, and, as our shortages have been mostly in the skilled categories, we have not been able to give as much assistance as we desired.

In addition, I have been in communication with the motor industry itself and with the Federal Treasurer to see if there is any useful action that the Government can take to assist the position.

As I have introduced the question of unemployment in this debate, I wish to refer to a recent statement by the Treasurer in this House regarding my ignorance of the proceedings of the Premiers' Conference and the Loan Council. I say very definitely that as a back-bencher, and even as Deputy Leader of the Opposition at that time, I did not ever receive any reports from the Treasurer on the matters discussed at the Premiers' Conference or the Loan Council, and I was somewhat surprised to be informed of my ignorance as Leader. Accepting the Treasurer's statement as true, I made extensive inquiries and have been informed that the Treasurer still has certain copies in his possession of what really took place, but they have not been made available to me. Therefore, the question that seriously concerns me is whether the ignorance referred to by the

Treasurer is my fault or whether it is caused by his ignorance and lack of courtesy in not making these reports available for perusal by all members of the South Australian Parliament.

I turn now to the recent extended waiting required to obtain anti-poliomyelitis injections at the unit in Wakefield Street. I questioned the Treasurer on this in the House previously, and was informed that it would be looked into. Subsequently, however, the Minister of Health has seen fit to issue a press statement saying that the waiting could be likened to a queue for ballet tickets. Surely, this is a heartless response from a Minister of the Crown. I understand that the manufacturing of anti-poliomyelitis vaccine is a very lengthy process, and it appears that supplies may arrive at irregular intervals. Therefore, I had hoped that some additional units might have been provided for in the colossal Loan expenditure before us, but I see that this is not the case. Perhaps the Treasurer did not consider purchases of this nature were important enough to be included in this programme, and that provision will be made in the Budget when it is placed before us. However, I should like to place on record that the unit in question happened to be in a position in Wakefield Street where the Sisters of Mercy came to the aid of the distressed mothers of families and provided seating, cooking and toilet facilities for them, and demonstrated clearly their Christian charity in a very unfortunate situation which contrasted strongly with the response from a Government Minister in another place.

When the Treasurer's introduction to the Loan Estimates is stripped of its verbiage, it boils down to the fact that the Loan Council has approved a loan programme for the whole of Australia of £240,000,000 for 1961-62, which is a £10,000,000 increase on that approved for last year. South Australia's share of the £10,000,000 is £1,381,000, and this extra allocation is slightly less than the increase we received last year when there was a similar £10,000,000 increase in the Loan programme for the whole of Australia. In addition to the £1,381,000 for Government activities, there would be available a small increase in the amount sanctioned by the Loan Council for semi-governmental bodies. Therefore, to this stage, there is a small increase in the governmental loan programme, but nothing of the magnitude I anticipated to overcome the present unemployment position. However, I examined the housing allocation of £8,100,000 because I thought that this might be the Government's

proposal for overcoming the housing lag as well as providing a stimulus to employment, but the figure does not stand up to close scrutiny because last year the Government provided £5,964,000 Housing Agreement funds, and £3,350,000 from the ordinary loan allocation, making a total of £9,314,000. Excluding ordinary Loan repayments, which would be approximately the same for the two years, the comparable figure for this year is £8,100,000 Housing Agreement funds, plus £800,000 ordinary Loan funds, or a total of £8,900,000. In other words, a reduction of £414,000; and this will not provide the additional stimulus necessary to restore the business confidence of industry which has been destroyed by the actions of the Menzies Government since last November. In addition, the Treasurer has continued with his policy of not making any finance available for the purchase of existing homes with reasonable equity.

I will now discuss the line Loans to Producers, £260,000, and in particular the item therein of £82,000 advanced last year to the fish processing co-operatives. I understand that the member for Eyre asked a question relating to net fishing that was taking place at Thevenard and Ceduna. Undoubtedly, the Fishermen's Co-operative at Ceduna would be quite happy to take all the fish caught in the area, but the big concern not only of the co-operative, but of the fishermen, is that there are a few who are operating bunt netting, which disturbs the seabed, causing the fish to migrate to other places, and this prevents other fishermen from earning a reasonable livelihood. Consequently, I think it behoves the Government to consider an immediate amendment to the Act to prevent this type of fishing to continue.

For Advances to Settlers an amount of £208,000 is provided. Last year we voted £134,000 on this line, with exactly the same terminology as this year, but only £52,446 was required. I should like the Treasurer to explain why the amount provided last year was not used, and why nearly four times the amount has been estimated to be required this year.

The sum of £620,000 is to be spent on South-Eastern drainage, which matter I have mentioned previously to the Government, but so far I have not received an explanation. It relates particularly to the drains in the western division of the South-East. Their construction was authorized by Act of Parliament in 1948, but construction was not commenced until 1950.

Therefore, it has taken the Government 11 years to construct 350 miles of drains in this area. To June 30, 1960, 342 miles had been completed, which means that the Government constructed only eight miles of drains in this division during the last financial year. I do not consider this to be a remarkable achievement by the Government.

Another factor that reveals tardy action by the Government in this matter is the assessment of lands that have been improved by the drains. Assessing was commenced in 1949, but to date the assessments have not been completed, and as no mention has been made of the matter I can only assume that the properties that have been considerably improved by the drains will not be rated for betterment even this year, and the indications are that the lands will not be rated prior to the financial year 1962-63.

In view of the fact that the Government was scrambling for additional revenue last year, and increased taxes and charges, such as water, sewerage and rail fares, it should have taken the opportunity to obtain a reasonable return from the £4,000,000 it has spent on drains in the western division of the South-East. The longer the Government leaves this problem the harder it will be to solve, because the settlers in this area will be justifiably angry if the additional interest charges of this scheme, brought about by the postponement of rating, are capitalized and made an additional burden on them.

Another matter needing clarification about these drains is that certain lands in the western division have been allotted under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme. The rents fixed on these lands include an amount equivalent to the betterment factor, but—and I emphasize this point to Government members—these rents are payable to the Commonwealth Government in terms of the War Service Land Settlement Agreement. Following my explanation to its conclusion, it seems that the State Government, over 11 years, has gradually built drains in the western division, yet pays the Commonwealth increased rents for war service land settlement land that has been improved by those drains. It certainly seems stupid to me to carry out and finance a scheme from State funds and then to pay the Commonwealth Government additional rent because the land has been improved by drainage. Instead of the bald statement that the Government intends to spend a further £194,000 in the western division this year, I would have preferred a reference to Government action to pro-

tect and redeem its present investment in the area of approximately £4,000,000.

Regarding the expenditure of £1,200,000 on afforestation and timber felling. I was pleased to see the following reference to output of log timber from State forests:

In 1960-61, the output of log timbers from State forests was in excess of 190,000,000 super feet, and, on present prospects, the figure will increase in 1961-62 to about 200,000,000 super feet, of which about 106,000,000 super feet will be processed in the department's mills and 94,000,000 super feet will be treated at private mills. From the milling of 106,000,000 super feet of logs at Government mills, the yield is expected to be about 40,000,000 lineal feet of flooring and dressed timber, and 2,000,000 super feet of undressed timber; 6,500,000 fruit cases, 3,000,000 super feet of case fitches, 20,000 sleepers and 20,000 posts. Of the 94,000,000 super feet of logs to be treated at private mills, some 61,000,000 super feet will be used for board and case production, 3,000,000 super feet for plywood manufacture for the furniture trade, and 30,000,000 super feet for pulp wood,

because I consider the prosperity and development of the State forests are vital to the advancement of the State. One statement which caused me some confusion, however, was the following:

£170,000 is set aside for preparation of land and planting. Approximately 5,000 acres will be planted during 1961-62.

Several months ago we were informed that the annual acreage planted would be increased from 4,000 to 6,000 acres. At the time I criticized the figures and pointed out that in the year before last nearly 6,000 acres were planted in the State forests. I have no hesitation in saying that these plantings should be maintained, but the Government has apparently altered its plans within several months and has given no special explanation to members.

However, reverting to the log output, the timber from our forests should be used more fully on construction work in the building industry than is the case at present. I would like to know, and it has never been explained in the Loan Estimates, what proportion of the processed South-Eastern timber from the mills can be guaranteed as suitable for home construction. I do not wish to criticize the operations of the Housing Trust, which is doing a commendable job with housing, but apparently Government policy is not to use local timber in home construction, because my information is that in the construction of Housing Trust brick veneer homes, where there is great scope for the use of the local product, certain imported timbers have been specified.

The mills should be able to guarantee the local product for use as scantling timber and then there would be great possibilities for its use as framing material in the internal walls in the brick veneer homes. I do not wish to argue about its suitability for roofing, because oregon, with its long grain, has demonstrated its suitability in this field, but there is still great scope for the use of South-Eastern timbers in home construction.

Another matter in relation to our forests concerns flooring. Without being too critical of our efforts in supplying flooring, but with the sole object of obtaining the greatest possible use of our product, it has come to my notice that looseness of the tongue and groove is causing some concern in the building industry. Is the trouble caused by the type of timber, the milling, or the kiln drying? The Government should ascertain where the trouble is occurring and rectify it so that the future of our forestry industry in the South-East will not be jeopardized. There is the challenge for us to overcome the difficulty and produce from our forests and our mills timber that compares in standard with imported timber. There is no reference in the Loan Estimates to show that the Government has tackled the problem of greater use of and improvement in the local product.

The other items to which I wish to refer under Afforestation and Timber Milling are the £87,000 required for payments in connection with the new power station and the £136,000 provided for a sewerage scheme at Nangwarry. In neither instance do I oppose improved facilities, but I oppose increased tariffs being imposed on the residents of the area. Nangwarry is only a settlement in association with an industry and provides only limited facilities for the family man, and the Government has used Nangwarry and other South-Eastern timber mills to obtain income for the general revenue of the State. Therefore, the Government, instead of increasing the tariff and charges on these people, at the same time paying surplus profits from this industry into the general revenue of the State, should use some of that profit to provide improved facilities for the employees in the area, who are just as responsible as the Government for expanding the industry which was established by a Labor Government.

The sum of £2,600,000 is provided for Railway accommodation. At the end of June 1960, the funds employed in the railways undertaking totalled £54,540,000 and that represents a huge investment which should be protected. We

realize the great work that has been carried out by the Railways Department in the past, particularly in the development of this State, and continued development relies on an efficient railway system. In recent years road transport has developed rapidly, but the Government should not allow it to compete unfairly with our established railway system. An unfair advantage is gained mainly because road transport does not make a fair contribution towards highway maintenance. Other States have introduced legislation, which is not contrary to section 92 of the Commonwealth Constitution, but for some reason our Government does not introduce similar legislation. Is this another example of big business dictating terms to the Government to keep interstate transport charges down while the heavy hauliers are not making their fair contribution towards the additional costs incurred in maintaining our interstate highways?

Another potential with a big capital investment is the provision of employment opportunities for South Australians on rolling stock construction at Islington. We did it in the past and I see no reason why it cannot be done now, but nowhere in the various diesel electric locomotives expenditures is any mention made that we are to carry out our own construction. Apparently this Government prefers to foster private enterprise in the eastern States rather than to cater for its own employment commitments in this State.

Provision of £180,000 is made for two diesel-electric locomotives for the narrow gauge, but one shortcoming in the Loan Estimates is that no mention is made of the tracks in the Port Lincoln Division. My view is that it is useless putting fast diesels on a track that cannot be safely worked at high speed. All types of rumours are circulating, even from the people who operate the service, that there is a grave risk because of the bad state of the tracks. Much money would be needed to restore the line, but some attempt should be made in that direction, particularly now that we have so much unemployment. Surely the Government will not go to the expense of buying these new diesels if it is not possible to run them at reasonable speeds. If the diesels are compelled to run at less than 20 miles an hour to ensure safe working the proper economics are not being observed and some attention should be given to the track.

In regard to the provision of £80,000 for the construction of 10 workmen's sleeping vans to

give better accommodation, the tradesmen employed in the carriage shop at Islington submitted a plan for the use of 45 suburban passenger cars as sleeping vans and for an enclosed workshop area 17ft x 5ft. I believe the original plan provided for the use of 30 caboose car frames, but it is now doubtful whether these will be used. It is proposed to use 23 underframes from what is known as the 900 class coaches, but these could be 60 or more years old, and they would not provide the same amount of enclosed accommodation as the tradesmen's proposal, and the placing of sleeping vans on these underframes leaves a space of 8ft. at either end with a handrail surround—rather an incomplete job. I would be pleased to know the estimated cost of these because I believe 10 will be commenced this year and the tradesmen estimate that they could save £3,000 per van.

I believe this matter should be more fully investigated. The sleeping vans are about 30ft. long and no fault can be found with the provision of them but, with the introduction of the diesel electric system, much of the rolling stock that was designed for use in conjunction with steam locomotives and used for suburban transportation is not suitable for present requirements. I also ask what consideration, if any, is given to the testing of the under-frames of the 900 class coaches, which were once referred to as side loaders and then as "dog boxes". They are up to 60 years old. I am not an authority on the quality or life of steel, but I know that it must deteriorate in time. It therefore seems wrong to put this type of sleeping van on obsolete under-frames.

I wish to introduce one final matter relating to railway finances. As the Treasurer referred to the magnificent achievement of the Railways Department's administration, I ask him how long it is going to take him to persuade his Government to grant some increased increment to the railway employees for the efficiency of their services, which has assisted materially in carrying the record grain loadings.

For waterworks and sewers, £10,350,000 is provided. I turn my attention now to the funds required for implementing water and sewer services. The point which struck me forcibly was that there appeared to be either some over-estimation last year or the Government put forward a programme that was too ambitious for the department to achieve. I notice that, in the overall picture, the department spent £120,462 more than its original pro-

vision of £9,000,000 but I would like further information on some provisions under the Adelaide water district which were not spent in accordance with the amount provided last year. For example, work on the following projects did not reconcile with the amounts provided:

	Amount provided. £	Amount spent. £
Mannum-Adelaide pipeline	343,000	166,000
Myponga reservoir .	1,712,000	1,280,000
Clarendon-Belair- Blackwood scheme	100,000	80,000
	<u>2,155,000</u>	<u>1,526,000</u>

On these three projects alone in the Adelaide water district there was an under-spending of £629,000, or about 30 per cent, yet the Treasurer has made no reference to this matter or said where the additional funds were utilized.

It was with interest that I noticed that further expenditure was to be incurred on the Morgan-Whyalla main duplication. I was under the impression that this project was still being considered by the Public Works Standing Committee, but I see that the Treasurer has already decided the project for it, because he has stated that the estimated total cost of the whole project is about £18,000,000. One would think that an opportunity would have been taken to fetch the route of this alleged duplication further north so that the problems of Booleroo Centre, Quorn and Terowie, and various other dry districts in that area, could be solved. But what do we find? We find that a large sum is to be spent some time in the future and that the Public Works Standing Committee has not reported on the full proposal, but it appears that the duplication is to keep close to the existing line. Even at this late stage, consideration should be given to extending the line on a more northerly route to meet the problems of the towns to which I have referred.

The main and major omission from the waterworks estimates was that no mention was made of any Government proposal on desalination. I thought earlier in the year we were getting somewhere when the member for Torrens demonstrated clearly that he was coming around to our way of thinking regarding the desalination of water as a means of obtaining a balanced development of South Australia. We have raised this matter over several years, but, even though the member for Torrens is

convinced, the other members opposite still appear to require a little more time to realize the possibilities of this process.

For school buildings, £6,000,000 is provided. It is because of my dissatisfaction with the way the Loan Estimates have been presented on education needs that I consider that there is scope here for additional funds to be made available for housing needs. My reason for saying this is that I consider that the estimates presented for education requirements have been inflated. Members on this side expressed the same view when the Loan Estimates were presented last year, and now the results are in accord with what we said then. In regard to education buildings, the provision last year was:

	£
The completion of 12 contracts with a total value of £1,329,000 for new schools or major additions which were in progress at 30/9/1960	823,000
The commencement of 62 contracts with a total value of £11,493,000 for new schools or major additions to schools	2,706,000
	3,529,000

The actual expenditure on these lines for the year 1960-61 was:

	£
The completion of 17 contracts with a total value of £1,527,000 for new schools or major additions to schools	897,000
Work under contract for 24 new schools or major additions with a total value of £4,913,000 still in progress at the end of June	1,687,000
	2,584,000

In other words, Parliament provided £945,000 more last year than was utilized by the Government on school building construction. Last year, the late Leader, in criticizing the estimates for school buildings, said:

If this over-estimating is common throughout the provisions for the Education Department, I say that there is a line where we can obtain at least £470,000 additional finance for advances for homes requirements.

That criticism has been justified because the Education Department was unable to spend £945,000 of this provision on school construction last year. In addition to the over-estimating factor, there was also the point that 62 new schools were put on the Estimates to be commenced in 1960-61, but, due to lack of planning by the Government on its education needs, not one penny was spent on 30 of these

schools: in other words, the Government achieved only approximately 50 per cent of its planned programme last year in regard to new school buildings. I do not deny that the department spent its full Loan allocation, but it only achieved this by frittering away its Loan allocation when it was unable to spend it on new school buildings. For example, £346,000 was provided last year for minor works, including grading and paving of school yards, fencing, roadways, toilets and facilities, etc., and furniture and equipment, but the department spent £916,000 on these lines. It is all very well to have nice paving and fencing around the schools, but I contend that the prime function of Loan expenditure on education is to provide adequate and suitable solid construction school buildings before the other requirements are met.

In my own electorate, additions to the Edwardstown primary school were on the Loan Estimates to be commenced last year at an estimated cost of £102,000, but nothing has been done and the only information I can obtain is that it is to be completed in 1963. We can expect, therefore, that this building which was approved in 1960, will not be commenced until the 1962-63 financial year. In addition to the Edwardstown primary school, I would like to know just how much longer the Forbes primary school, which has an enrolment of 1,765 children, has to wait before it gets any solid construction buildings in addition to the one that was erected for 320 children, and how long the South Road primary school will have to wait before it gets even one solid construction building.

Forbes primary school, with 1,765 children, and in its tenth year of existence, requires an opportunity class. Both the Ascot Park and Morphetville Park primary schools have opportunity classes, and the latter is of much later vintage than Forbes. Admittedly, there are remedial classes at Forbes which can take 12 children in a class. Those classes take 12 children from grades four to seven (representing about 1,000 children in all) in each of four periods during the day. Only a few weeks ago there was a recommendation that an additional 69 children from the school should enter the remedial classes, but only 13 out of the 69 were able to be accommodated. At present 138 boys in grade seven receive their instruction in woodwork at the Morphetville Park primary school and the Plympton high school, both of which were erected much later than Forbes. The boys go for their instruction in teams of

20, with the result that the woodwork instruction has to be spread over four days each week. The morning curriculum provides for five and two-thirds lessons, but because of the travel involved the boys lose one and two-thirds lessons each day they have to travel for woodwork instruction.

The school has 10 solid construction classrooms in the primary division catering for about 400 children, and 22 portable classrooms accommodating about 830 children. In two year's time the school will have seven grade seven classes, four of which will be for boys. How can anyone expect the headmaster of that school to prove his value when adequate facilities are not there? How can I, as the member for the district, say that the department is doing a splendid job when the school has been in existence for 10 years and yet still lacks the facilities afforded other schools? The headmaster's office is situated near the entrance to the school in Thomas Street, and he has to walk a quarter of a mile to get to the most distant portable classroom. Once a fortnight he goes around all the classes distributing merit cards because he still likes to keep in touch with the children, and if he spends only five minutes in each classroom it takes him half a day to go around the school. Children in some of the portable buildings have to walk about 120 yards each way to the toilet, without any protection from the weather.

The parents of children at this school, because of the things I have mentioned, are becoming very dissatisfied. I often receive copies of communications from the secretary of the school committee to the Director of Education. That body communicates with the Director, but, if I am asked to take up a case on its behalf, I communicate with the Minister of Education, and not the Director. I tell the Minister that much of what I am saying now I have not told him before. He knows my attitude about these schools. I think I have been over-patient. I say the department has an inflated programme, in view of these proposals before us. These Loan Estimates contain projects that we shall not see the commencement of, let alone the completion of, within the next 10 years. This is a serious matter. Am I, as the representative in Parliament for this area, asked to get on the end of the line for another 10 years? Are the children at Forbes still going to walk 120 yards to the toilets? Will it take the headmaster a day to go around and give out the certificates? We must do something different

from what is proposed. Instead of the Education Department's preparing its estimates, let us get down to the true facts of this case. Our patience is limited. Many people are building houses in this area and are sending their children to the local schools; therefore, we must try to improve the facilities at the schools.

I see no sense in sending the Public Works Standing Committee flitting around the countryside just prior to the presentation of the Loan Estimates in order to be able to put 73 new schools on the Loan programme for this year when there were 30 schools on the Loan programme last year which have not been started yet. At the present rate of spending, it will be 10 years before many of the proposed schools will see the light of day. We should expect to deal with a more realistic Loan programme from year to year, and there should be a public works programme more readily available to assist in the unemployment position, because I am in accord with the views of the Minister of Works, expressed last Friday, that the effect on employment through the Government building programme would not be instantaneous. I should like to have seen some measures put forward by the Government for some instantaneous effect on the unemployment position rather than what appears to be a kite-flying programme of the Treasurer.

He introduced and approved the programme. If money can be spent on new diesels for the Eyre Peninsula railway system, let us see what we can do, even at this stage, to transfer some of this Loan money to make it available for other projects. Let us transfer some of the unemployed to Eyre Peninsula and give them the opportunity to work. If they cannot do the work, let us make some other provision. It is necessary that we tackle this problem immediately. I made a plea to the Public Buildings Department, which has spacious enough buildings on the Marion Road. We must be prepared to train men in the building industry. Instead of building work being let out piecemeal, it is the Government's responsibility to give an opportunity to those engaged in the Public Buildings Department to prove that they are capable of doing such work. We are fast approaching the time when we are not getting satisfaction for the money we are spending. With the Government's system of tendering and its non-recognition of sub-contractors, no wonder we are going from bad to worse—and we shall get much worse before we get better, under this Government's administration. We

must face up to the problem of what is necessary in the economy to assist in solving this unfortunate unemployment position.

I come now to housing, involving a sum of £40,000. I was amused by the Treasurer's valiant attempts to prove that additional funds were being made available for housing in South Australia, but I am not convinced. As a matter of fact, my view is that the Government has lost ground with its Government housing programme even in the last five years, and I submit the following table showing an index of completions by the Housing Trust during the last five years converted to a per capita basis and based on figures released by the Housing Trust:

Year.	Index to Housing Trust completions per capita.
1956-57	100
1957-58	94
1958-59	95
1959-60	93
1960-61	95

This table demonstrates that, on a per capita basis, the Government completed five per cent fewer houses through the Housing Trust last year than it did five years ago. Of course, if we take the year 1952-53 as a base year when the Housing Trust had a particularly good year, on a per capita basis the Government completed 35 per cent fewer houses through the Housing Trust last year than it did in 1952-53. I did not use this figure in the table because I do not wish to be accused of giving a biased view, but even over the last five years the Government has lost ground with the housing problem, and this position is demonstrated clearly to me by the number of applications I have had recently from private individuals seeking housing accommodation of any sort.

I now cite some unsatisfactory practices which are developing in the contracting for Housing Trust houses, namely, the introduction of a piecework system. The Housing Trust has, up to the present, selected builders to do its work, and the standard of housing has improved over the years. If people are to invest £4,500 in houses, they expect something good, and the trust has been able to satisfy the requirements. My information discloses that bricklayers are engaged on labour-only basis, but in some cases where they reach the height where scaffolding is required they leave the job because they are unable to make reasonable wages under those conditions. A bricklayer has a reasonable chance of making enough money while the first five to seven

courses of bricks are being laid, but immediately he has to climb a scaffold his financial return diminishes, particularly at the rate for which he is expected to work by the trust.

I know that the Housing Trust had builders engaged in the erection of their houses under a contract system, that these builders worked under the principle of award rates and conditions as provided by the industrial tribunal of the State, and that they were able to do a proper and efficient job. Whenever we ask questions about Government employment we are informed that it is the Government's policy to abide by award rates and conditions. The time must come when the Government must intervene and tell the Housing Trust that unless it reverts to its previous policy the Government will not finance the work. That would be a reasonable approach. The houses, when handed over to the trust, were up to a standard which people were pleased to accept. It appears now that these same contractors are unable to compete on account of the unsavoury practices which are being employed by certain of the contractors who are obtaining this work. Whereas apprentices in the industry were previously being trained, in the system which is now prevailing no opportunities are presented for the training of apprentices. Also there is an extreme element of doubt in my mind that the people who purchase the present houses will obtain them any more cheaply than prior to this piecework system. Whilst dealing with afforestation, I mentioned the fact that we should utilize more of our local timber in the construction of Housing Trust homes, and therefore there is no need for me to repeat those remarks now.

The sum of £35,000 for the Printing and Stationery Department is purely to cover capital equipment and stores, but I should like to know just how much longer the Government Printer is going to await the pleasure of this Government to be housed in suitable premises to carry out the work which is involved in the control of his department. I believe that we can claim that the Government has promised to have this matter attended to. It is one which is long overdue and it is to be hoped that the Government will make some immediate move to have this position rectified.

The south-western suburbs drainage scheme is another example of where we voted expenditure last year for the carrying out of work of a high priority, but the Government did not meet the challenge. Last year we voted

£150,000 to be spent on this scheme, but the Government was only able to achieve work to the value of £45,000—that is, less than one-third. We are asked to vote £250,000 this year, but it is useless to vote the money if the Government is not going to proceed promptly with the work. Although I know that the drain from the Marion Road to Sturt Creek has now been completed, and that the drain at Edward Street, Brighton, is in the course of construction, what is the cause of the hold-up in providing the necessary plans so that the control committee can decide on the question of priorities or, for that matter, let contracts for much of this work? I believe that here there is reasonable scope to immediately relieve the unemployment position if the Government will proceed with the work promptly. In addition, is the Treasurer in the position to give some firm indication as to whether the Sturt Creek is likely to be straightened in the area which has been set aside for the South-Western Districts Hospital and the Oaklands Estate National Resort, because I believe that the development of this national resort project could be affected by proposals relating to the straightening of this creek?

Finally, I wish to refer to two points raised by the Treasurer. The first was his statement that:

After allowing for £311,000 of Revenue Account deficit outstanding from the previous year, this enabled the Government to recoup to the Loan Account £877,000, or more than the aggregate of all amounts which had been put aside out of Loan moneys since 1938 to finance revenue deficits.

This does not give a true presentation of facts, and therefore I will elaborate upon it. During the period 1938-39 to 1959-60 there were revenue deficits totalling £6,939,692 and, of this figure, £3,143,359 was reimbursed by special grants from the Commonwealth Government, and the Treasurer should be pleased to explain that this source of funds has now ceased because we are in the fortunate position, in his opinion, of being a non-medicant State. During the same period there were Revenue surpluses totalling £3,691,913, so that there was a small deficit balance of £104,420. Instead of the Treasurer confusing the issue, all that was required in explanation for 1960-61 was that the Revenue surplus of £1,188,000 would be recouped to the Loan Account as had happened in all past years with Revenue surpluses. The Revenue surplus of £1,188,000 for last year brings me to the conclusion of the Treasurer, which was:

I would stress again that the programme to be undertaken this year must have been less had

it not been possible to use the 1960-61 Revenue surplus to make a good Loan funds previously put aside to finance deficits. The use of the surplus in this way is a valuable contribution to essential services and to providing jobs.

My answer to this is that his Government, whilst budgeting for Revenue surplus during 1960-61, has contributed to the present unemployment position in this State, because it has removed effective demand from our community when it was also being subjected to a credit squeeze by the Menzies Government. As soon as we became aware of the mounting unemployment (and this was last February) we approached the Treasurer for a conference between Government, industry, commerce and the trade unions, to work out ways and means of solving the problem, but he avoided the issue. Now he is trying to curry political favour by suggesting nearly six months later that a similar conference should be held. Unemployment in South Australia has nearly doubled in the last six months and was caused by the action of the Commonwealth Government with its credit squeeze, together with this Government's budgeting for a Revenue surplus at the same time. This reflects my view of the activities of the present Government rather than the Treasurer's over-optimistic opinion of the achievements of his Government. I support the first line.

Mr. KING (Chaffey): I could not but be impressed by the way the Treasurer spoke concerning what can be done with the sum available to the State. I think he illustrated again that he brings matters of this nature right down to earth, and measures them by the yardstick of simplicity when he says we cannot spend more than we have. Our Treasurer has brought the ship of State through the financial seas during the last 20 years, particularly during the last 12 years, and has kept it on an even keel. He makes no apology for the way he uses the Loan moneys that are available to the State for its development. I am sure that had it not been for his prudent and imaginative leadership we would not be so well off today. One cannot spend more money than one may have or more than one may borrow. That applies also to the State, which has Loan money made available to it from borrowings by the Loan Council; and we cannot borrow any more either directly or indirectly.

Borrowings by the semi-governmental authorities are all taken into account by the Loan Council, and therefore the amount available to the State Government is strictly limited

to the arrangements made at the Loan Council, which is comprised of the State Treasurers and the Prime Minister. Therefore, we have an upper limit set—not only the sum that may be borrowed, but the Loan programmes of the States must be financed from Commonwealth revenue to give the States anywhere near the amount they require. From press references, it has been noticed that State Treasurers have worked out Budgets far in excess of the sum the Loan Council can supply, and the sum ultimately available is that which the Commonwealth Treasurer is prepared to release from Revenue sources. In that case, he has the last word.

I compliment the Treasurer on the way he has handled the affairs of South Australia at Loan Council meetings in getting extra money for this State, which is so urgently needed now, and which in the past has borne such wonderful fruit. The only other money available is from internal funds held by the Government and by such bodies as the Housing Trust. To make a comparison of the funds available, we can check up by referring to the figures in last year's Loan Estimates. These moneys are being employed to promote works that the Government has in hand, particularly for housing, to absorb unskilled people, who are having a very difficult time.

I think the Treasurer and his Government have done much to relieve a position that has developed through no fault of the Government. It is pleasing to see that the amounts to be made available from various sources will be increased by 10 per cent this year compared with the amount available last year. Although that 10 per cent will be an ameliorating factor in dealing with the present situation, we must not forget that the population and a number of industries in the State are continually growing, and the need to provide the essential services must also grow every year. We must not only meet the needs of the unprecedented expansion, but also take into account the position of those who are suffering from a temporary check in employment.

Mr. Riches: The actual amount we are budgeting for is less than that for last year.

Mr. KING: In his speech the Treasurer said that the amount was 10 per cent greater.

Mr. Riches: The amount on the Loan Estimates is less than that of last year.

Mr. KING: I have not studied the figures in great detail, but will have a look at that point. Money can be deflected from one place to another, but if we have to rob Peter to pay Paul, Peter must go short. The flow of money

has enabled the State to provide employment for more people, and this is a great credit to the Treasurer. One department has been able to find employment for an extra 1,000 people, for which the Government is to be commended. The housing programme will be encouraged in many ways and will result in releasing much more purchasing power in the State.

If any evidence were wanted of the people's confidence in the Government and its works, it was amply afforded last week when a loan for £900,000 being raised by the Electricity Trust was over-subscribed in about two days. That is a direct vote of confidence not only in the trust but also in the Government, which influences the trust's policy.

Mr. Jennings: What about Parliament? Doesn't that get some credit?

Mr. KING: The Government cannot act without Parliament's authorization. The way in which the loan has been over-subscribed more than confirms the faith in the Government's policy, which has resulted in the high prosperity we have undoubtedly enjoyed during the past 10 years. It also has shown that investors regard the Electricity Trust as a first-class investment. They are prepared to accept £5 15s. per cent on their money, whereas on other securities double that figure, and sometimes even more, is offered.

Mr. Riches: Does that indicate a turn toward Socialism?

Mr. KING: Not at all. I think it indicates that the people of South Australia have shown their confidence in the imaginative programme of the Government.

Mr. Riches: Do you call it Government enterprise?

Mr. KING: It is State enterprise. In this case there is a happy marriage between State and private enterprise. The Government has shown the way in this matter. In addition to showing faith in a Government undertaking, the early subscription to the loan shows the desire of the public to participate in low rate secure investment. The Government has given a lead by diverting low cost money for housing activities. This will be of great advantage to home building and is another example of the Treasurer's forethought.

Mr. Riches: Was it not stipulated by the Commonwealth Government?

Mr. KING: The Treasurer did not have to put all the money into housing. The Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement specified a certain amount but our Treasurer added more to it. The maintenance of, and an increase in,

the Housing Trust programme, as well as help by the State Government to house builders, is as much as the Government can do, but it is a great help in present circumstances. It is useless making sudden transfers of money from one operation to another, or allowing funds to dry up suddenly. The people who deal in cycles often go over the handlebars when the brakes are applied suddenly. That has happened frequently. When money has been transferred from one operation to another the results have been unfortunate, but in this matter the Treasurer is making the change gradually, but it could be done more quickly in an emergency. In the last few years high interest rates have been offered on loans. It is unfortunate that this great risk is taken with high interest rates at the consequent cost of loss of capital in many instances. This has been shown by the reports of failures of companies operating on un-realistic interest rates, but I believe that things will adjust themselves.

Mr. Riches: With controls.

Mr. KING: If we have too many controls we get an artificial situation.

Mr. Riches: Do you suggest control of wages?

Mr. KING: I do not. The other day the Treasurer said that cost of living and the ability of industry to pay were the principal factors governing wages, and I agree with him. I come now to the matter of loans to producers, in which I have a great interest. The amount allocated for this year is £260,000, an increase of £8,000 on last year's amount. The provision of this money has always been a great help to growers and industries along the River Murray. Without it the progress of the industries could have been seriously retarded. In many ways it has meant the provision of more facilities, such as distilleries and packing sheds. Opportunities have been provided for co-operative markets and better returns to producers.

For many years co-operative packing sheds in river areas have made full use of facilities available to them under the Loans to Producers Act, and I am pleased that that has been recognized by the Government. One other way in which the provisions of this Act can be used is the development of private irrigation. When we had the Irrigation on Private Property Act before us we included the useful parts of the Loans to Producers Act, which enabled some people to proceed with schemes. That was followed by other schemes. Two are operating at Waikerie,

one at Moorook, and another is being considered for another district. This morning I heard a talk by the promoter of another scheme at Nildottie. The provision of this money will mean additional development along the river and an increase in facilities for processing and marketing produce as it becomes available.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned the Advances to Settlers Act, under which £208,000 is to be spent. This will be of greater interest to growers than to the co-operative companies because they will be helped in their developmental work. The money will be used to provide such things as piping, pumps, fencing, buildings, implements and tractors, but there is one apparent anomaly. Growers along the River Murray have discovered that Crown irrigation areas are excluded from getting the benefits available to other growers in South Australia. The anomaly is that a grower on the other side of the river from Berri can get an advance under the Act to develop his land by irrigation, and get motors, pumps and spray equipment, but the grower on the opposite side, who wants to borrow money to develop his high land, finds that he is not eligible because the Act does not apply to him. The reason is that in the early days the financing of growers on Crown irrigation areas was in the hands of the Minister of Irrigation and came under the Irrigation Act. He had the power to grant small loans and it was probably deemed advisable not to have any duplication. It was apparently thought that he should handle the finance because he was responsible through his office for the collection of water rates and instalment payments.

Over the years the policy has changed and now the Lands Department has gone out of the business. The State Bank has come in and now makes money available, but it cannot make long term loans available because it has no authorizing Act to permit credit foncier loans to settlers in irrigation areas. In consequence, the settlers have fallen between two stools. The settler who wants equipment and payment for it spread over a period cannot get a loan under the Advances to Settlers Act in the same way as can a settler outside the irrigation areas. I ask the Treasurer to review this matter and rectify this apparent anomaly. Following the electrification of the pumping stations at Berri and other places, a considerable area of high land has become available for further development in irrigation areas. Some of it is owned by young people—sons of existing settlers—and they want to increase the money they have available by borrowing under

the Act, but find that they are not eligible to do so. Much more land could be brought into production without the Government's incurring any additional cost if some of this money were made available. Hundreds of acres of extra irrigable high land, for which permits have been granted, is controlled by the Minister of Irrigation.

Mr. Bywaters: Are extra rates payable or are the settlers still paying about £9 10s.?

Mr. KING: The rates are the same, but the settlers would have the additional cost of pumping the water. A cost of from 15s. to 20s. an acre per irrigation is incurred according to the planting and the situation of the land, but that is accepted by the growers as an additional cost. I doubt whether it would pay a settler to try to develop such an area unless he had some supporting income.

Mr. Bywaters: Is this land outside the irrigation areas?

Mr. KING: All the properties are within the areas. When the irrigation areas were first established the water was taken to the highest point from the river and reticulated by channels, eventually being taken back to the river. In the Berri irrigation area the open reticulation channels cover about 80 miles. The only ground that could be watered was lower than the channels and much high land above the channels, which was often the best tree land, could not be watered by gravitation.

Mr. Bywaters: They installed their own pumping plants to take the water out of the channels.

Mr. KING: Yes, provided water was available. The settlers required power and pumping plants and it was their responsibility in most instances to approach the department, but generally the department insists that only spray irrigation shall be used. As a means of developing from the basis of an existing fruit property, that is a good thing because usually the farmer or the blocker and his son put their time into it but it becomes expensive if the employment of labour is necessary. The point is that we can, as I pointed out in this House long ago, increase production tremendously at little extra cost: all that is involved is the extra cost of pumping. Pumping stations, channels and everything else are available and modern pumps can put water through much more quickly. Therefore, the irrigation rosters are not disturbed by demands for the additional water except in some cases where the channels cannot carry more. However, we must increase the capacity of the channels, as is necessary in the Monash district, so the growers

will not miss out. Such action would result in a good thing for the settlers and for the Government.

I am pleased to note the provision of £130,000 for the commencement of work on the Blanchetown bridge, which has been long desired by the river people and which will provide a direct free access road to the eastern States. The completion of the Paringa causeway, in which four bridges are mentioned, will also provide a safe crossing of the river under practically all circumstances. Here again the policy of spreading the work and the payment for it over a three-year period obviates a sudden accumulation of labour and materials in one place and it also eases the strain on State finances, the latter being a most important aspect in the long term.

The expenditure on the modernization of the pumping stations has proved most successful and has resulted in much cheaper operation and a steadier and faster flow of water. The time for general irrigations has been considerably reduced, which has allowed more time for watering extra land, and advantage is being taken of that as circumstances and finances permit. In this direction settlers have been helped considerably by the policy of the Electricity Trust of making power available on the river. This has helped give our people the same electricity facilities as are enjoyed by city people and it has also enabled the development of new schemes at Waikerie and elsewhere.

I have mentioned the growth of the river towns generally to illustrate the need to improve township and water services at Berri, Barmera and Renmark, for which financial provision has been made. This growth follows the encouragement, which has been given to enterprising people to extend their activities in these areas by new plantings and the expansion of existing plantings, and help provided to industries to serve these areas. Recently I spoke at some length on the way industries have been developed locally to service these areas and I said that well over £1,000,000 had been spent in the last year or two in that regard. The growing pains of these towns have created problems because open irrigation channels run through the towns. This problem exists even though most channels have been fenced off as a safety precaution. The channels were originally on the town boundaries, but the towns have grown to such an extent that as much of the town is now built above the channels as is built below them, consequently the channels present a hazard to children, who will play in water whenever it is available.

At Barmera the channel runs through the centre of the town and two schools are adjacent to it. A similar position exists in Berri. As time and funds permit the department is converting the channels to pipelines. I have been asked by the Barmera district council to bring this matter to the notice of the Treasurer in the hope that the work will be expedited.

The people of Chaffey thank the Treasurer for the recognition of the plight of the settlers in the Ral Ral division but I notice that only £10,000 has been provided for work to proceed on a comprehensive drainage scheme at Chaffey. Only last week an interim report by the Public Works Committee recommended a drainage scheme for this area at a cost of about £137,000. The onset of seepage and salt troubles in this area since the 1956 flood has been so rapid that corrective measures are now most urgent and I make a special plea for sufficient funds to be made available this year to enable these settlers to be given substantial relief from their disabilities. That will involve the commencement of most of this work in the current year. If that is not done soon, I am afraid that some settlers will have the utmost difficulty in carrying on and in meeting the cost of internal drainage which will normally follow the introduction of a comprehensive scheme.

Mr. Shannon: The longer the drainage scheme is delayed the greater will be the loss in plantings and, consequently, the settlers' difficulties.

Mr. KING: That is what I am afraid of. The settlers' capacity to pay will be reduced by the length of time it takes to install the drains. On water supply and sewers generally the Government has maintained its record of giving the people of this State unrivalled services—services that compare more than favourably with those in any other State. Last year £9,000,000 was spent, and this year over £10,000,000 has been allocated. Planning is still going ahead in anticipation of the needs of the next generation for both water and sewerage. This has been done by increasing the number of reservoirs and catchment areas. It has been a great accomplishment to keep this State in water for the past few years without restrictions despite a recent drought and a low rainfall this year. Once again our great dependence for the future on the River Murray system is underlined.

I was interested to see that a world authority recently quoted in the *Advertiser* stressed the need for care in looking after the catchment areas of the Great Dividing Range, par-

ticularly those areas controlled by the Snowy Mountains authority. This authority (Mr. Dewar W. Goode) pointed out that above the 6,000ft. level irreparable damage had already been done by clearing natural cover, burning off, and bulldozing. This had been followed by massive erosions which had two results. The first was the siltation of dams. If members want a further illustration of this type of thing, they have only to look at the Pekina reservoir near Orreroo, which practically silted up overnight and is of very little use. The other damaging factor was the reduction of the absorptive capacity of the soil. Because of this, the more water we get the more erosion there is, so it causes a cumulative damage. I shall quote a little from this article because it has a great bearing on the subject and I think we should have a record of it in *Hansard*. Mr. Goode is an authority on soil preservation, and, according to the *Advertiser* of August 11, he said:

The proposal for a primitive area on the Mount Kosciusko summit by the Australian Academy of Science would ensure South Australia's interest. In the driest continent in the world an area which can receive eight feet of rain or more (including snow equivalent) every year, hold most of it in the winter and deliver that water in the summer is an extremely valuable catchment. It is probable that something of the order of 200,000 acre feet of water would come annually from the proposed 70 square mile primitive area.

I remind members that 200,000 acre feet of water is the quantity we are using for irrigation in this State now. The article continues:

A primitive area needs to be large and must be preserved in its natural state by a programme of absolute conservation. Development would be restricted or even prohibited. The Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Authority would not be able to construct dams, aqueducts, roads or tracks. This would mean a slight but unimportant modification of the plans.

The report estimates that projected engineering works would add only 5 per cent to the total energy produced by the S.M.A. and would contribute very little water for irrigation. Tourists would still be able to use the existing road to the summit but if it is to remain primitive access will need to be limited and even commercial enterprises would not be tolerated. Man in the past has done so much damage that active conservation works will need to be carried out to ensure that the area remains a lovely alpine region of unique scientific value. It will please the conservationists who are fearful of the consequences of further development and it will have support from the irrigators and the towns and villages on the fertile but water-hungry plains to the west.

And that means South Australia. The article continues:

Even those as far away as Woomera, Iron Knob, Whyalla and Port Augusta will benefit in the long run—I have not even mentioned water-conscious Adelaide. The destruction of the alpine vegetation whether by fire, animal or massed machinery can have most disastrous effects on the water productivity of the catchments. Continuous, until recently, annual stocking, repeated deliberate burning and in particular the heavy concentrations of stock in drought years have caused serious erosion over most of the alpine area.

At the lower levels the S.M.A. has evolved satisfactory remedial measures consequential on its major earthworks programme, but at the high levels—over 6,000ft.—the erosion initiated over a period of 150 years has had cumulative effects and has reached alarming proportions. It is not generally appreciated that our Alps are, in the main, dirt mountains, not rock mountains, and that the thin veneer of mountain humus with its covering of snow grass and hardy herbs, in places, protects upwards of 200ft. of highly erodable soil. The erosion threat is real. If there is a proper cover of grass the melting snow and the high rainfall (about 100in.) works its way down into perennial streams, there is little or no siltation of reservoirs and we can expect regulated stream flow.

This article proves that eventually we will have to depend on these catchment areas, and the Murray water will help to ameliorate the position. South Australia is vitally concerned about anything that happens to these catchment areas, as the river must eventually become our greatest and most useful source of supply. We will need to make every use we can of our possibilities for production, particularly under irrigation, which gives a high regular production of fodders and foodstuffs for a hungry world with a population which is now estimated

at 3,000,000,000, and which is increasing by 55,000,000 each year. The possibilities stagger the imagination.

As the school building programme has been criticized, I point out that in introducing these Estimates the Treasurer said:

The school building programme in recent years has kept abreast of current enrolments. I investigated this matter and found that in 1950 there were 86,000 pupils; there are now 178,000—more than double. We had only 3,298 teachers 10 years ago; now we have over 6,000. In 1950 there were only 679 trainees; now we have over 3,000. Not only has school building kept up with the needs of the community (no child seeking tuition has been turned away), but we have kept up with the need for teaching staff as well. We have increased our adult education service and our opportunity and remedial classes. We are also dealing closely with the problems of retarded children through the department's occupational centres, one of which will soon be opened at Berri. I commend the Minister for the way he has handled this difficult problem, and I know he must feel much more relaxed now that the position is so well in hand. We would all like to see solid construction buildings in our schools, but we would rather have emergency buildings (although many of these will be permanent) than none at all. I support the Loan Estimates.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.10 p.m. the House adjourned until Wednesday, August 16, at 2 p.m.